

EPA tackles 'hot spots'

*Workers remove
toxic soil, drums*

By JASON WHITE
Managing Editor

While Solutia tackles problems at Dead Creek's headwaters, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is cleaning up "hot spots" near the creek's mouth.

Workers have removed 6,000 tons of soil and 300 drums from about 40 acres of land between the Mississippi River floodwall and the Alton Railroad spur, EPA on-scene coordinator Kevin Turner told about 85 people at a town meeting last Tuesday at Bethel United Church of Christ in Cahokia.

Seven workers, including four from the Cahokia-Dupo area, have been working out of two trailers on Cargill Road for about a month, Turner said. The waste is being shipped by rail because it is cheaper and keeps local roads from being clogged with trucks, he said.

"We're digging out hot spots of contamination," he said.

Turner said the drums had solvents, paint waste, heavy metals such as lead, and PCBs. Among the names of companies found on the drums were Dow Chemical,



Photo by Jason White

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is working out of two trailers on Cargill Road to remove contaminated drums and soil from 40 acres of land near the Mississippi River. No one was at the site on Friday afternoon.

Mallinckrodt and Monsanto, Solutia's parent company.

Turner said residents face little risk from the contamination because there are not any residential areas nearby.

"I'd recommend that nobody go down there and play around," he

said. "For the average citizen, as long as they stay away from the area, there isn't going to be any exposure."

About 93 acres were used as a dump until 1973, Turner said. Eagle Marine bought the land after the dump closed and Sauget

Mayor Paul Sauget previously owned the site, he said.

The 1993 flood exposed drums and waste on the surface. Much of the waste is located at depths from zero to five feet deep.

See EPA, page 3A

Solutia to remove creek soil EPA must first approve plan

By JASON WHITE
Managing Editor

Residents living near Dead Creek may be about to see action to solve one of the area's longest running problems.

Michael Light, remedial projects manager for Solutia Inc., said that the company on Friday proposed a plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to remove contaminated soil from Dead Creek between Queeny

"We are very aware that the citizens over there are eager to see actual work that is protective take place."

Michael Light
Solutia

See SOLUTIA, page 3A

INDEX

Special Notices.....2A
Opinions.....4A
Regional News.....5A
Obituaries.....6A
Sports.....1-2B

Cahokia residents trash waste hauling

*Cost is cited
as main concern*

By JASON WHITE

But many of some 50 residents at the public hearing said they don't think having one company will solve that problem. Some said 18-wheelers using subdivision streets as shortcuts and trucks

"When we do a lot of things, the first thing that comes to mind is the apathy in the village... there are



lar...
tax levy ordinance for FY2000.

During the council's regular business:

■ The mayor commended Alderman Mary Ellen Niemietz for successfully negotiating the new three-year contract approved with the Fraternal Order of Police. Details of the pact were not available at press time, but the contract is effective from last May through April 30, 2002.

■ The aldermen approved an ordinance establishing water connection fees of \$1,460 for city residents and \$1,700 for out-of-city res-

...the act...
...use the mayor will be out of town when the next regular meeting of the board is held and the payment of routine bills must be approved at that meeting.

In introducing the resolution allowing for the appointment of an alternative representative, city attorney Tom Adams explained to the aldermen that laws governing creation of the board only allow for one representative from each entity (Columbia and Cahokia Commonfields are the only entities) and the board cannot legally conduct business without both entities being represented.

St. Paul Cemetery... the cemetery's drive as access to a proposed house site on the property. In order to meet city zoning rules, the property owners also must acquire additional land to bring their site up to the 2.5 acres required for building sites in areas zoned A-1.

The aldermen approved the hiring of Robert Helmers, a paramedic, to work for the Columbia Ambulance service part-time on weekends. They also agreed to the appointments of Tobin Search to the Street Graphics Committee and Robert Thoma to the Revolving Loan Fund board.

Solutia

Continued from page 1A

Avenue and Judith Lane.

The plan calls for the soil to be placed in a double-lined 15-foot-high landfill on about an acre of land near the creek, Light said.

"It's not something that would stand out on the landscape," Light said.

The area between Queeny and Judith has the highest levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in creekbed sediments. PCBs, banned in the early 1970s, have been found to cause liver damage and cancer after long-term exposure. The area is fenced off, but

people can easily go under the fence where the creek crosses Judith Lane.

Light said he expects the EPA to approve Solutia's plan within a month. The estimated \$4-5 million cleanup would start this winter and be finished before spring.

"We would be addressing the source of the contamination," Light said. "We are very aware that the citizens over there are eager to see actual work that is protective take place."

Another source of concern is the flooding that periodically fills residents' basements and yards. Solutia is working with the EPA to

replace two culverts on the creek's south end to improve drainage.

However, Light said even with better flow, a 25-year storm would still cause flooding.

Solutia is the only one of 26 companies and individuals to agree to an EPA order to fund a \$3 million study of four miles of Dead Creek and surrounding areas that have been used as dumping sites since the 1930s.

Light said that study, which has been ongoing since January, will determine what actions need to be taken in other areas. A full-scale cleanup is not expected until 2001.

EPA

Continued from page 1A

"Prior to that (the flood), a lot of things were buried at a greater depth," Turner said.

Turner said the cleanup is expected to cost \$2.4 million, which is being paid for through the federal Superfund program.

The EPA also is working with Solutia on replacing culverts to improve drainage, Turner said.

"It's not an easy answer," he

said. "We're looking at a phased approach."

EPA remedial project manager Mike McAteer said a full-scale cleanup will not start until after an April 2001 evaluation of cleanup alternatives.

Under an EPA order, Solutia is funding a \$3 million study to gather information about contamination along four miles of the creek and in adjacent landfills.

Researchers will analyze samples of soil, ground and surface water, air and plants and animals. The study is expected to be finished this spring, after which Solutia will present its findings and recommendations to the EPA.

"We don't have to wait to get to the end of all this data collection before we can do some things in the worst-contaminated areas," McAteer said.

Trash

Continued from page 1A

think changing providers is going to take any trucks off the street."

Hubert Cobb said he surveyed 25 of his neighbors.

"Not one of them was for that plan," Cobb said.

Trustee Norma Jones, who chaired the meeting in the absence of Mayor Mike King and senior Trustee Joe LiVigni, thanked residents for voicing their opinions.

"When we do a lot of things, the first thing that comes to mind is the apathy in the village," Jones

Jones and others said the change is needed to make sure everyone has trash service. Residents will have their occupancy permits revoked if they do not have trash service.

"We've got houses where three people put in for one trash pickup," Trustee James Traiteur said. "That's got to be eliminated. It looks like a dumpster out there."

When residents asked why the code enforcement department couldn't enforce ordinances aimed at preventing those problems, trustees responded that the two-

Home Rule Committee Chairman Trustee Virginia Edwards, who has been taking the lead on the trash hauling proposal, said the board will consult with its attorneys on what to do next. Edwards, who pays \$13 a month for trash collection, said she was surprised to hear people saying they payed less.

"We're not going to do anything until this is thoroughly discussed and we come up with a good fair price," Edwards said. "We'll have

Full
2000 Bu
99 Sa
1999 Bu
Now O
99 Blazers
leath
2000
20
Can't Find What Your Lo
LN
RT. 3

You
to
To
Chr

Touc

Ro

OB De

ROSE Pr

&

Attenda

Win a str

or

Saggy